

Town of Arlington
Town Meeting Procedures Committee
July 19, 2023

Call to order: The meeting of the Town Meeting Procedures Committee was called to order by Town Moderator Greg Christiana on Wednesday, July 19, 2023 at 7:38pm.

Quorum: A quorum was present: Adam Auster, Greg Christiana, Rebecca Gruber, Christopher Moore, and John Worden.

Public Comments:

- No public comments were offered.

Minutes of Prior Meetings:

June 14, 2023:

Moved approval: Mr. Worden

Seconded: Ms. Gruber

Vote: unanimous

Old Business:

Town Meeting Debrief (continued):

The committee continued discussion of possible changes and/or clarifications to Town Meeting procedures including:

- When a motion changes a previously existing text (e.g. of a Bylaw or of another motion) should we encourage a particular form of expressing the changes? There was general agreement that the motion should express the changes (e.g. “strike the third sentence in section A and replace it with...”) and then provide (as a comment) the new text as amended. Motions that seek to amend such a motion would then need only to amend the list of changes, not the comment that shows the amended text in full. This also avoids the potential for a conflict if the changes do not match the text in full due to a clerical error.
- When reports of boards and committees are accepted under Article 3, when is the text of the report fixed and no longer changeable by the reporting board/committee without a motion to amend/substitute? The consensus of the committee was that reports should not be changed without a motion after they have been received. The Moderator will take this under advisement.

Consent Agenda:

The committee reviewed Draft Guidelines for Consent Agenda prepared by the Moderator and offered comments on wording, clarity, and the procedure for removing articles from the Draft Consent Agenda when it is presented to the meeting.

Motion Policy:

The committee reviewed a Draft Policy for Submitting Substitute Motions and Substantial Amendments prepared by the Moderator. Discussion included the present 48-hour rule and

changes that might be made to ensure thorough collaboration with the Moderator on proposed motions, how late motions could be made without time for Moderator review but with some notice to the meeting, and mechanisms for distributing motions.

Survey:

The committee discussed the value of surveying the members of Town Meeting to get further input. Mr. Christiana agreed to draft some questions that might appear on such a survey.

New Business:

None.

Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 9:19pm.

Moved: Mr. Moore

Seconded: Mr. Auster

Christopher Moore